

## DESIGN ACTIVITIES TO CORRECT PRONUNCIATION ERRORS IN /n/ SOUND AND /l/ SOUND FOR FIRST-YEAR ENGLISH MAJORS AT THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION

Nguyen Thao Van\*, Do Tay Hien

TNU – University of Education

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Received:</b> 08/4/2022	English major first-year students at Thai Nguyen University of Education who live in different regions of Vietnam have their own problems in terms of pronunciation. In particular, because of the dialect factor, some students make mistakes about the /n/ sound and /l/ sound when speaking Vietnamese, so those two sounds are also mispronounced when speaking in English. In this research, the researcher considers finding out the pronunciation mistakes that students often make and the percentage of students mispronouncing /n/ sound and /l/ sound; simultaneously, design activities to help correct pronunciation and correct errors of /n/ and /l/ sounds of English major first-year students at Thai Nguyen University of Education. The action research method was used to perform this study. Besides, data was gathered through questionnaires, which were then supplemented by the tests (a pre-test and a post-test) and interviews. The findings of the research found that the majority of errors students have a tendency to make are mispronouncing consonants and pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound. The result also shows that the correction exercises in /n/ sound and /l/ sound for English majors are remarkably effective. According to research, it offers a new source of data to assist teachers in teaching students' speaking skills, as well as a practicing source for students to develop their pronunciation in /n/ sound and /l/ sound.
<b>Revised:</b> 30/5/2022	
<b>Published:</b> 30/5/2022	
<b>KEYWORDS</b>	
English	
Pronunciation /n/ sound and /l/ sound	
Speaking skills	
First-year major	
Thai Nguyen University of Education	

## THIẾT KẾ HOẠT ĐỘNG SỬA LỖI PHÁT ÂM /n/ VÀ /l/ CHO SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGỮ NĂM NHẤT TẠI TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC SƯ PHẠM THÁI NGUYÊN

Nguyễn Thảo Vân\*, Đỗ Tây Hiền

Trường Đại học Sư phạm – ĐH Thái Nguyên

THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO	TÓM TẮT
<b>Ngày nhận bài:</b> 08/4/2022	Sinh viên năm thứ nhất chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại trường Đại học Sư phạm Thái Nguyên sống ở các vùng miền khác nhau của Việt Nam có những khó khăn của riêng họ về cách phát âm. Đặc biệt, do yếu tố phương ngữ, một số học sinh mắc lỗi về âm /n/ và âm /l/ khi nói tiếng Việt, do đó hai âm đó cũng bị phát âm sai khi nói tiếng Anh. Trong nghiên cứu này, nhà nghiên cứu xem xét việc tìm ra những lỗi phát âm mà học sinh thường mắc phải và tỷ lệ học sinh phát âm sai hai âm /n/ và /l/; đồng thời, thiết kế các hoạt động giúp sửa lỗi phát âm, sửa lỗi âm /n/ và /l/ của sinh viên năm thứ nhất chuyên ngành tiếng Anh trường Đại học Sư phạm Thái Nguyên. Phương pháp nghiên cứu hành động đã được sử dụng để thực hiện nghiên cứu này. Bên cạnh đó, dữ liệu được thu thập thông qua bảng câu hỏi, sau đó được bổ sung bằng các bài kiểm tra (kiểm tra trước và kiểm tra sau) và phỏng vấn. Kết quả nghiên cứu đã phát hiện ra phần lớn lỗi học sinh mắc phải là phát âm sai các phụ âm không có trong tiếng Việt và mắc lỗi phát âm âm /n/ và /l/. Kết quả cũng cho thấy các bài tập sửa âm /n/ và âm /l/ cho chuyên ngành tiếng Anh có hiệu quả rõ rệt. Nghiên cứu cung cấp một nguồn dữ liệu mới để hỗ trợ giáo viên dạy kỹ năng nói của học sinh, cũng như một nguồn thực hành để học sinh phát triển cách phát âm của họ trong âm /n/ và /l/.
<b>Ngày hoàn thiện:</b> 30/5/2022	
<b>Ngày đăng:</b> 30/5/2022	
<b>TỪ KHÓA</b>	
Tiếng Anh	
Phát âm âm /n/ và âm /l/	
Kỹ năng nói	
Chuyên ngành năm thứ nhất	
Trường Đại học Sư phạm Thái Nguyên	

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34238/tnu-jst.5835>

\* Corresponding author. Email: bacvd@dhsptn.edu.vn

## 1. Introduction

It goes without saying that mastering English is very important for most people, especially students. Most schools have begun to choose English as a compulsory foreign subject in their educational program. In the past few decades, people have observed reinvigorated to teaching and learning English as a foreign language (L2) pronunciation. This recovered outstanding is mostly because having an explicit L2 speech is considered an important skill for L2 learners to involve effective communication [1]. Pronunciation plays an essential role in spoken language; especially, in anticipating the next speaking contend, filling gaps in understanding context, and making assumptions about the overall direction of communication [2].

Pronunciation is producing sounds that are used to make sense as Pourhosein Gilakjani implied [3]. Besides, pronunciation is also the method of pronouncing a word in an acceptable manner [4]. In addition, Richard and Schmidt defined pronunciation as the production method for certain sounds [5]. Another researcher stated that the main objective of teaching and learning in any language is to enable students to communicate using the target language and if so, communication is an important term that must be explained [6].

A common error made by the multiplicity of international students studying English as a second language does not give sufficient attention to English pronunciation. This underestimating of pronunciation's importance stems from students' erroneous belief that pronunciation is less important than other aspects of the English language, such as grammar, lexicology, and vocabulary. They spend a lot of time learning grammar for tests and examinations each semester, meanwhile, they are quite afraid of speaking English. Speaking English in high school appears to receive less emphasis than the other subjects. They do not spend enough time in class practicing speaking, which is one of the main reasons they have difficulty speaking. Moreover, many students are weak in grammar, lack vocabulary, and feel so shy when communicating in English. In fact, while learning English, there are many problems relating to pronunciation errors that ESL learners have a tendency to make such as intonation, ending sounds, lisp, sentence stress, idioglossia, etc [7]. In fact, students in different regions of Vietnam have their own problems related to pronunciation aspect. According to Harmer (2001), a large number of teachers do not pay much attention to English pronunciation [6]. The causes of this neglect are different. Almost all students agree that knowing how to pronounce is unnecessary and that learning how to pronounce is a waste of time [8]. They believe that communication in English is sufficient and that nothing else is important when you understand them. Students who are studying English majors at Thai Nguyen University of Education, have the future mission of becoming language teachers for students, so the task of developing pronunciation for them is very important. In the future, their target audience is students learning a new language, particularly English; therefore, the teacher has a great role and influence on the pronunciation process of students learning English. That requires teachers to be exemplary in pronunciation. If teachers pronounce incorrectly, they will not be able to practice correct pronunciation errors for their students. The main objective of teaching and learning in any language is to enable students to communicate using the target language and if so, communication is an important term that must be explained [9]. Pronunciation is a vital part of communication and without proper pronunciation, no one can say that he/she knows the English language perfectly. Harmer also emphasized that by teaching pronunciation activities, students not only learn the different sounds and sound characteristics, they also improve their speaking skills. It can be seen that four skills in learning English are also important but the most important one must be speaking skills. However, this is a skill that students are often afraid of English major first-year students at Thai Nguyen University of Education whose speaking skill seems to be not good enough; in particular, because of the dialect factor, some students make mistakes about the /n/ sound and /l/ sound when speaking Vietnamese, so those two sounds are also mispronounced when speaking in English. Some provinces belong to the Northern dialect region such as Bac Giang, Hung Yen, Hai Duong, Thai

Binh, Nam Dinh, Bac Ninh, ect where it carries typical characteristics of the Northern dialect. If students who study English pedagogy come from these provinces, want to get the professional standards of English teachers, they must overcome the limitations of the local dialect. Harmer indicated that learners may seldom attain 'perfect' pronunciation such as native pronunciation [6]. However, learning the pronunciations of the sounds that occur both in Vietnamese and English is not difficult such as /n/ sound and /l/ sound. People who have those pronunciation mistakes can be corrected with practice over time. In this research, when surveying and analyzing students' pronunciation ability and based on the fact of collected data the researcher will not analyze all the content in pronunciation knowledge but only consider finding out the pronunciation mistakes that students often make and the percentage of students mispronouncing /n/ sound and /l/ sound; Simultaneously, design activities to help correct pronunciation and correct errors of /n/ and /l/ sounds of English major first-year students at Thai Nguyen University of Education.

Recently, a lot of researches and trials related to correct pronunciation in /n/ sound and /l/ sound have been performed. For example: "Some methods to correct pronunciation errors of the first consonants n and l for preschool children at Phung Xa Kindergarten" [10] found the cause of standard deviation of the first consonants l,n; Besides, this study has given some solutions to foster the pronunciation of standard consonants of the first l,n sounds for 4 and 5 years-old children in grade B3 at Phung Xa Kindergarten. According to a study conducted on pharmacy first-year students at the university of medicine and pharmacy, Thai Nguyen University has shown the difficulty in practicing English speaking skills of affected students due to the confusion between /n/ sound and /l/ sound when they speaking Vietnamese [11].

As researcher Pham Thuy Hang has shown in her study "Survey of phonetic variations of /l/, /n/ - Case study of Dai Loc village, Yen Chinh commune, Y Yen district, Nam Dinh province" [12], she has asked people about their attitudes towards using the negative variation /n/ and /l/ sounds considering the need to change or want to continue maintaining pronunciation variations. Then, up to 73.7% of people over 50 years old in Dai Loc village, Yen Chinh commune, Y Yen district, Nam Dinh province, in Vietnam, have no demand to modify the confusing pronunciation of /l/, /n/ sounds.

In addition to the error correction solutions proposed by linguists, in the language community, there have also been campaigns to correct /n/ sound and /l/ sound pronunciation errors such as correcting errors for teachers and students in 13 suburban districts of Hanoi [13]; Correct pronunciation errors in different regions such as Hai Duong, Hai Phong, etc.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Definition of articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound

Articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound are understood as a form of disease caused by defects in the vocal organs or the phenomenon of speech imprecision in children due to the incomplete vocal apparatus which cited from the research "Solutions to overcome the phenomenon of speaking and writing lisp l and n for students of the Faculty of Linguistics, Hanoi National University of Education 2" [14].

According to expert researchers, articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound means not pronouncing some sounds correctly due to defects or not speaking fluently. Thus, according to this definition, articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound are understood as a form of the disease caused by defects in the vocal organs or the phenomenon of speech imprecision in children due to the incomplete vocal apparatus. In practical communication, this articulation error is also used to refer to the phenomenon of incorrect pronunciation of correct pronunciation. For example, N is pronounced as L, and vice versa. When it comes to pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound, people immediately think of confusing the first two consonants /n/ and /l/. Is the explanation for this because the confusing pronunciation of these two sounds is quite common in the frequency of words appearing and common to many people and regions? In addition, the contrast between the /n/ and /l/ sounds is so great that most people notice this standard deviation [15].

## **2.2. Common pronunciation mistakes of Vietnamese and how to correct them**

According to domestic researchers who have conducted surveys and studies, there are some common pronunciation mistakes that Vietnamese people in general often make. They found it hard to pronounce ending sounds, mispronounced consonants that do not have in Vietnam, and linking sounds.

Some suggested techniques for students to correct pronunciation errors referenced from a domestic below can improve pronunciation errors such as playing games related to pronouncing sounds in English, training ears by listening to music, recording yourself, watching pronunciation videos on Youtube [15].

## **2.3. The problem of confusion when pronouncing /n/ sound and /l/ sound**

Most leading experts in linguistics agree that the confusing pronunciation of /n/ sound and /l/ sound is not the phenomenon of articulation errors that are local pronunciation habits, or in other words, dialect characteristics. The phenomenon of confused pronunciation of /n/ sound and /l/ sound is very common in the Northern Delta in Vietnam. This phenomenon is similar to the cases where "tr" is pronounced as "ch", "s" is pronounced as "x". Regardless of whether the phenomenon of confused pronunciation n/ sound and /l/ sound is a dialect feature or articulation error, it is clear that there is an undeniable fact that in many communication situations, the pronunciation of /n/ is confused /n/ sound and /l/ sound caused negative consequences for the speaker. The loss of good job opportunities, especially work opportunities for foreigners, especially for those who mispronounce /n/ sound and /l/ sound. Based on the above comments, to serve the purpose of the topic, I propose the concept of confusing pronunciation of the first two consonants N and L as follows:

The phenomenon of confused pronunciation /n/ sound and /l/ sound is only considered as a phenomenon of mispronunciation (or articulation errors, standard deviation) when considered in a narrow range, such as in family, in school, or in school. agency... At that time, the confusing pronunciation of /n/ sound and /l/ sound needs to be adjusted and molded towards standardization in terms of pronunciation. When the phenomenon of mixed pronunciation of /n/ sound and /l/ sound is common in many localities, on a large scale, for example, in the Northern Delta provinces such as Hai Duong, Hung Yen, Bac Giang, Thai Nguyen, Nam Dinh, etc then I think it's not articulation errors but rather local pronunciation. In this case, in my opinion, it is difficult to adjust the confusing pronunciation of /n/ sound and /l/ sound according to the standard, but only in terms of spelling. In this case, if we want to correct it, it needs to be done carefully, methodically, over a long period of time, and with the involvement of linguists.

## **2.4. Important understanding of pronouncing /n/ sound and /l/ sound**

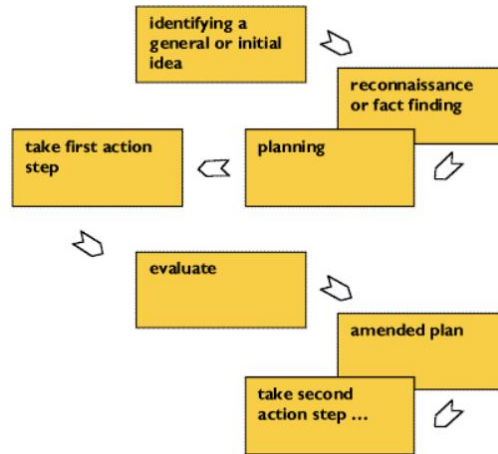
In Vietnamese, there are sounds /n /, /l/ like in the English consonant sounds system. It seems to be the main reason answer for the issue that if Vietnamese individuals mispronounce /n/ and /l/ sounds tough to make these sounds. Now we continue to look more closely at two of those sound features and from that work out some possible solutions to support the learners when they have mistakes in pronouncing these sounds. The /n/ and /l/sounds are verbalized in practically a similar way. The tongue contacts behind the tooth edge [16]. For the /n/ sound, the tongue is a little flatter. To create the /l/sound, press simply the tip of your tongue against the rear of your upper teeth and voice out through your mouth. Now and then it is useful to twist the sides of your tongue up. Besides, the /n/ sound is known as the "alveolar nasal," which implies that you put your tongue against the edge simply behind your top teeth and the air comes out of your nose. To create the sound, put your tongue against the edge simply behind your top teeth with the goal that your mouth is totally shut and voice out through your nose [17].

## **2.5. Action research**

In scientific education, action research has been used in three areas: teacher education and professional development, science learning research, and curriculum creation and

implementation. Teachers are researchers in every circumstance, whether they are researching their own methods of instruction and evaluation, exploring cognitive learning processes, or participating in curriculum research and creation [18].

The steps in the basic cycle are shown in Figure 1 [19]:



**Figure 1.** Circle of action research

In summary, the researcher chooses action research as a method for his research because it can reflect both this type of interpretive practice and more standard empirical-analytic research. The concept of a circle can be a great teaching tool, and it's easy to fall into the trap of utilizing it as the template for practice activities to correct pronunciation errors of /n/ and /l/ sounds for English major first-year students at Thai Nguyen University of Education

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants

The participants in this study were Thai Nguyen University of Education first-year English majors. A total of ten students participated in the experimental activities out of a total of 104 students who took part in the initial questionnaire.

#### 3.2. Instruments for data collection and research procedures

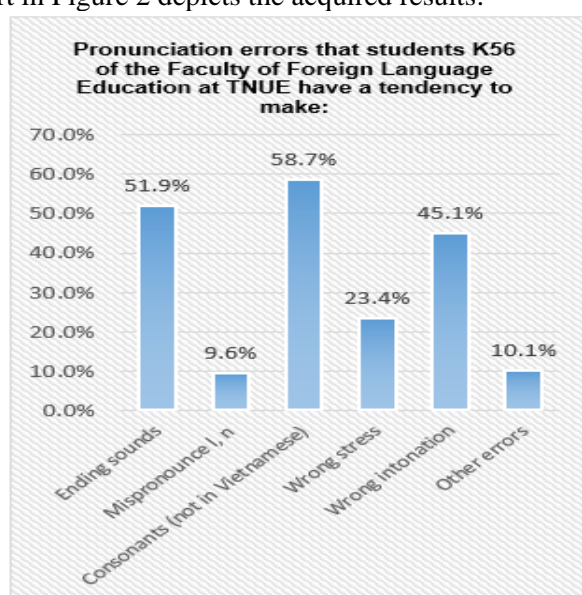
The action research method was used to perform this study with questionnaires and tests were utilized to collect data for this research. Data was gathered through questionnaires, which were then supplemented by the tests (a pre-test and a post-test) and interviews.

To acquire information from the subjects, the researcher employed two Pre-tests and a Post-test as the primary observation method, who were 10 students have pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound. The students were given a link to the questionnaire on Google Form as well as a self-assessment questionnaire form to complete. The researcher designs the test in the form that students have to read words, sentences, and passages containing /n/ sound and /l/ sound in both English and Vietnamese; And listen then choose the word heard. The test was then distributed to 10 English students in class K56 who were chosen by the questionnaire in step 1 and all students were given the test only once. The researcher conducts weekly practice exercises of speaking for students in a group on Facebook. Students in this study participated in seven weeks of speaking activities. Students must comply with the researcher's requirements. The researcher then scores follow scale-score and gives feedback, reviews, and conclusions. There are 7 listening activities to correct pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound designed under 7 different topics but still have the same structure. At the end of a seven-week training exercise, the

researcher designs a test that has the same form as the Pre-test. After all, there was a short interview for students' self-assessment of general information about the experiment. The researcher is able to obtain data information services for research thanks to the various interview questions and items. The participants have to do a seven-week training exercise. Finally, the researcher employed the Microsoft Excel calculating tools to synthesize and assess the results acquired in order to understand the study's problems.

#### 4. Finding and discussion

The researcher gave a questionnaire that asked the student's current status of pronunciation and determine whether or not they have /n/ and /l/ sound pronunciation problems. This questionnaire was conducted on 104 students first-year English majors at Thai Nguyen University of Education. Working with specialized research students yielded a large number of results at first. The chart in Figure 2 depicts the acquired results:



**Figure 2.** Pronunciation errors that students K56 of the Faculty of Foreign Language Education at TNUE have a tendency to make. This figure consists of 6 columns representing 6 pronunciation errors that the students have a tendency to make; statistics are expressed as a percentage

The conclusions of the graph are as follows: it can be clearly seen that the majority of error students have a tendency to make is mispronounced consonants that do not have in Vietnamese (58.7%). The rate of students forgetting to pronounce the ending sounds is the second highest, up to 51.9%. The remaining errors are wrong intonation, wrong stress, and other errors, accounting for the following percentages 45.1%, 23.4%, and 10.1%, respectively. The proportion of students who have pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound make up a small proportion of the chart (9.6%). This proves that besides the common pronunciation errors, there are still errors in pronouncing /n/ and /l/ in students first-year English majors at Thai Nguyen University of Education.

Table 1 below shows the situation of misspelled first two consonants n and l. Of the total 104 students surveyed, the case of students who have articulation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound is 10 students accounts for 9.6%. Besides, there are also students who say it wrong but write it correctly. The above statistics show that the trends of articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound are not too different from each other. Also from the actual survey, I found that the reason why students could not distinguish the /n/ sound and /l/ sound when pronouncing was not mastering the phonetic characteristics of these two sounds. In fact, during the teaching process, the lecturer also provided this knowledge (when describing the phonetic - acoustical characteristics of

consonants) but practiced pronunciation in accordance with the phonetic characteristics of the two sounds. This has not been given due attention by students. This is what makes them confused in pronouncing the two consonants N and L. Another important reason is the living environment. Specifically, based on the survey, I found that the number of students whose articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound concentrated mainly in the Northern Delta, Nam Dinh, Hai Duong, Thai Binh, Bac Giang, etc, where people often mispronounce the first two consonants n and l. Thus, this number of students is mainly concentrated in cities such as Bac Giang, Hai Duong, Lao Cai, Quang Ninh, Thai Binh, Nam Dinh, etc. These are the localities where people have a habit of mispronouncing /n/ and /l/. Students in mountainous provinces such as Lang Son, Lai Chau, Tuyen Quan, etc. mispronounce less. Besides, the situation of confused pronunciation of L/N has become common because the teaching of subjects in general, phonology has not focused on training skills in using English in communication. Especially the practice of speaking and writing skills to the standard.

**Table 1.** Number of Students with articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound in each locality

Hometown	Number of mispronunciations	Proportion (%)
Thai Nguyen	1	10
Bac Giang	2	20
Hai Duong	1	10
Lao Cai	1	10
Quang Ninh	1	10
Thai Binh	1	10
Lang Son	1	10
Nam Dinh	2	20
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

After that, 10 students who have pronunciation mistakes in the /n/ sound and /l/ sound will be given a pre-test. The researcher designs the test in the form that students have to read words, sentences, and passages containing /n/ sound and /l/ sound in both English and Vietnamese; And listen then choose the word heard. When students are taking the speaking test, the researcher can also use observation to assess the initial evaluation of learners' speaking capacity students uses to take the test. Out of the results of the Pre-test, the researcher selects students whose pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound to participate in the research process. Table 2 and table 3 show the results of the students' pre-test.

**Table 2.** Students' scores in Pre-test

	Pronunciation score			Total score (on 10 points scale)
	Read the sentence (10 sentences)	Read passage (13 words containing /n/ sound and /l/ sound)	Listening score (10 questions)	
Student 1st	7/10	9/13	7/10	7
Student 2nd	9/10	9/13	8/10	7.8
Student 3rd	9/10	10/13	8/10	8
Student 4th	9/10	11/13	8/10	8.5
Student 5th	9/10	9/13	8/10	7.8
Student 6th	8/10	8/13	7/10	7
Student 7th	10/10	10/13	9/10	8.7
Student 8th	9/10	10/13	7/10	7.8
Student 9th	8/10	9/13	9/10	7.8
Student 10th	9/10	11/13	10/10	9

**Table 3.** Percentage of students' scores in Pre-test

Scores	N (number)	P (percentage)
≤ 7	2	20%
7-≤ 9	7	70%
≥ 9	1	10%

According to the results of the two tables above, the lowest number in Table 4 is accounted for by  $\geq 9$  points on the Pre-test (N=1, P=10%), the highest number is accounted for by  $7 \leq 9$  points (N=7, P=70%), while another one is accounted for by  $\leq 7$  have the average number (N=2, P=20%). The reason why students did not get the maximum score for the Pre-test is because they have articulation errors /n/ sound and /l/ sound.

Beginning of the experimental activities, initially, the researcher prepared a lesson plan and provided students with instructions on how to pronounce /n/ sound and /l/ sound and practice pronouncing texts, sentences, and words containing the first two sounds of /n/ and /l/ sounds appear. On the student's side, students are asked to participate in the activities. The teacher can ask students to explore new vocabulary which contains the first two sounds of /n/ and /l/. Meanwhile, the researcher observes the behavior of students and participants during this period to capture somewhat the attractiveness or not attract students to make new choices for the whole content study. After the whole activity, the researcher gave the students a test by taking a test designed to be equivalent to the entrance test and they are assessed based on scores on scores after the test. Following the test, the researcher synthesizes the findings in order to undertake synthesis, comparison, and assessment in order to offer remarks to demonstrate the efficacy of this strategy with students. These numbers are also clearly demonstrated in the ability of students to speak in each sentence, each word. The most authentic results of success through the lessons are shown in table 4 and table 5. The statistics in table 4 and table 5 show the point of students engaged in the seven-week training exercise. The number of sets of score  $\geq 9$  increased as it started with N=1, P=10% and increased to N=9, P=90% (9 times more the number of points of the Pre-test). Score  $7 \leq 9$  also decreased from 7 in the Pre-test to 1 in the Post-test. This result is related to the efficacy of students' activities to correct pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound. Students were attempting to practice and develop their speaking skills for this process. Furthermore, students not only read but also gain a great deal of knowledge about which words contain the sound /n/ and which words contain the sound /l/. Finally, the participants' listening skills improved as seen by their results. The results obtained from the Pre-Test and Post-test correctly assessed the participants' speaking ability. Their growth index score shows how far they've come. Finally, the outcomes of the tests. The overall evaluation of the experimental method was found to be positive after the post-test.

**Table 4.** *Students' scores in Post-test*

	Pronunciation score		Listening score (10 questions)
	Read the sentence (10 sentences)	Read passage (13 words containing /n/ sound and /l/ sound)	
Student 1st	9/10	13/13	9/10
Student 2nd	10/10	11/13	9/10
Student 3rd	10/10	13/13	10/10
Student 4th	10/10	13/13	10/10
Student 5th	9/10	12/13	10/10
Student 6th	9/10	11/13	9/10
Student 7th	10/10	13/13	10/10
Student 8th	9/10	13/13	10/10
Student 9th	10/10	12/13	10/10
Student 10th	10/10	13/13	10/10

**Table 5.** *Percentage of students' scores in Post-test*

Scores	N(number)	P(percentage)
$\leq 7$	0	0%
$7 \leq 9$	1	10%
$\geq 9$	9	90%



The results show that students clearly and correctly perceive the importance and effectiveness of spending time practicing correcting pronunciation errors for these two sounds. However, the number of students who do not have the consciousness to cure their lisp is still there. This seems like a contradiction, but it reflects the reality of students: aware but not acting. Lack of determination and perseverance makes it difficult to successfully cure lisp. Therefore, the first solution we raise is still educating students about consciousness. In the process of curing syphilis, the teacher plays the role of a guide, orientation and supervisor, while students need to be active and active. In addition to the classroom treatment hours, with the orientation and help of teachers, students need to have a sense of regular practice at home, anywhere, anytime, in any form of communication.

For students in localities with a lot of mispronunciation, it will be more difficult to cure lisp, and the phenomenon of relapsing is very easy if they do not have the sense of regular practice.

## 5. Conclusion

In short, during the experiment, the researcher will help first-year major students at Thai Nguyen University of Education self-practice pronouncing /n/ sound and /l/ sound many times in seven weeks. They'll be able to memorize the material, and the representation will help them retain it for longer. This also helps them develop and improve their knowledge about which words contain the sound /n/ and which words contain the sound /l/ in both English and Vietnamese. Up to 90% of students who participated in the experiment scored 9 points out of a maximum of 10 points; In addition, 40% of students achieved maximum marks after participating in the seven-week self-practice exercise. This has proven that the correction exercises in /n/ sound and /l/ sound for English majors are remarkably effective. It affects students and makes them consciously practice to eliminate this pronunciation error rather than passively practice. Based on the foregoing findings, the researcher concluded that it is possible to apply self-practice activities to help improve the pronunciation errors in /n/ sound and /l/ sound at Thai Nguyen University of Education for this reason. Students have greater access to words, sentences, and passages containing /n/ sound and /l/ sound in both English and Vietnamese which they are unfamiliar with. Although there are certain challenges in putting this strategy into practice, if there is more interest and support from the staff and the school, they will be resolved shortly. As a consequence, based on the agreement of the instructor and the assistant teacher, the researcher recommends employing it. Furthermore, the research sought to uncover second-year English majors' problems in pronunciation and learning speaking at Thai Nguyen University of Education.

In summary, the researcher concludes that, when L/N confusion occurs in a large geographical area, it is local pronunciation habits or dialects. This case, in our opinion, does not need to be corrected. The phenomenon of mixed pronunciation of L/N is considered a pronunciation error or a lisp when this phenomenon occurs in a narrow range, such as in the family, school, or work. Then, the pronunciation phenomenon. This confusion requires adjustment, correction, and correction to reach the correct pronunciation.

An important theoretical basis for us to conduct this research is based on the concept of spelling standards. Spelling standards are rules of a legal nature that everyone must follow. In fact, when writing, people clearly distinguish the first two consonants L and N. Therefore, when pronouncing these two consonants, it is also necessary to pronounce them correctly according to the written word.

Based on the results of the investigation and survey, the topic also gives some objective and honest comments and assessments about the phenomenon of L/N confusion of Thai Nguyen University of Education students. The results of the investigation and evaluation show that the state of confused pronunciation of L and N is a fact that occurs in the Faculty of Foreign Languages Thai Nguyen University of Education. In terms of schools, this is really a serious pronunciation error, causing many negative effects on the students themselves and on the training quality of the school. Therefore, it is very necessary to correct the pronunciation errors of /n/ sound and /l/ sound within the first-year students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages.

According to research, it offers a new source of data to assist teachers in teaching students' speaking skills, as well as a practicing source for students to develop their pronunciation in /n/ sound and /l/ sound. In addition, the findings' limitations and recommendations for future research are provided to aid future scholars.

## REFERENCES

- [1] R. Thomson and T. Derwing, "The effectiveness of L2 pronunciation instruction: A narrative review," *Applied Linguistics Journal*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 326-344, 2015.
- [2] M. Celce-Murcia, D. Brinton, J. Goodwin, and B. Griner, *Teaching pronunciation: A coursebook and reference guide*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- [3] A. P. Gilakjani, "What Factors Influence the English Pronunciation of EFL Learners?," *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods - Islamic Azad University*, vol. 6, no. 4, p. 315, 2016.
- [4] M. Otlowski, "Pronunciation: What Are the Expectations?," 1998. [Online]. Available: <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Otlowski-Pronunciation.html>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [5] J. C. Richards and R. W. Schmidt, "Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics," 2011. [Online]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315833835>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [6] J. Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited, 2001.
- [7] S. Ming-yueh, "EFL Learners' English Speaking Difficulties and Strategy Use," *Education and Linguistics Research*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 88-102, 2019.
- [8] G. A. S. Alzahrani, "The reasons behind the weakness of speaking English among English Department's Students at Najran University," *Journal of Education and Human Development*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 48-56, 2019.
- [9] M. Hancock, "Pronunciation in the English language classroom is more than just 'listen and repeat'," 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/teaching-pronunciation-more-just-listen-and-repeat>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [10] T. L. Nguyen, "Some methods to correct pronunciation errors of the first consonants n and l for preschool children at Phung Xa Kindergarten," 2014. [Online]. Available: <https://123docz.net/document/2647822-skkn-mot-so-bien-phap-sua-loi-phat-am-lech-chuan-phu-am-dau-l-n-cho-tre-mau-giao-nho-truong-mam-non-phung-xa.htm>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [11] M. T. Pham, V. A. Hoang, V. L. Lu, and H. D. Nguyen, "Difficulties in practicing English speaking skill of students of K15 pharmacy at University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Thai Nguyen University, and solutions," *TNU Journal of Science and Technology*, vol. 226, no. 8, pp. 165-172, 2021.
- [12] T. H. Pham, "Survey of phonetic variations of / l / , / n / (Case study of Dai Loc village, Yen Chinh commune, Y Yen district, Nam Dinh province)," 2017. [Online]. Available: <https://123docz.net/document/5198374-khao-sat-cac-bien-the-phat-am-cua-l-n-nghien-cuu-truong-hop-lang-dai-loc-yen-chinh-y-yen-nam-dinh.htm>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [13] M. L. Le, "Reasons for correcting l sound and n sound in schools on the outskirts of Hanoi and initial results obtained," 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://we25.vn/xa-hoi/ly-do-sua-ngong-l-n-trong-truong-hoc-o-ngoai-thanh-ha-noi-va-nhung-ket-qua-ban-dau-247123>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [14] K. N. Le, "Solutions to overcome the phenomenon of speaking and writing lisp l and n for students of the Faculty of Linguistics, Hanoi National University of Education 2," 2014. [Online]. Available: <https://www.tailieudaihoc.com/3doc/3472236.html>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [15] T. L. Hoang, "Some suggestions for correcting errors made by English non-major first year student at HPU of pronouncing ending sounds," 2013. [Online]. Available: <http://luanvan.net.vn/luan-van/khoa-luan-some-suggestions-for-correcting-errors-made-by-english-non-major-first-year-students-at-hpu-of-pronouncing-70813/>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [16] C. Munro, "How to pronounce the l sound (/l/ phoneme)," 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.englishlanguageclub.co.uk/l-sound/>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [17] C. Munro, "How to pronounce the n sound (/n/ phoneme)," 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.englishlanguageclub.co.uk/l-sound/>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].
- [18] K. Lewin, *Action Research for Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1991.
- [19] M. K. Smith, "What is action research and how do we do it?," 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://infed.org/mobi/action-research/>. [Accessed April 7, 2022].